

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for permanently deforming a flexible film material, in which the film material is deformed, comprising the steps of:
~~providing a positive and negative mould having edge portions and upper portions;~~
~~forming a single receptacle depression in the film material between the moulds, wherein the film material is kept under controlled tension while it is being moulded, so that controlled creases are formed in the film material;~~
~~reducing wherein the tension is reduced in a controlled manner whereby additional film material is allowed to penetrate between the positive and negative moulds;~~
~~wherein creases are formed in the film material around the entire edge portion and the upper portion of the film material retains its original shape during the deforming procedure.~~
2. (Canceled)
3. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the tension is controlled by applying a controlled retaining force to peripheral regions of the film material.
4. (Previously presented) The method as claimed Claim 1, wherein the tension is controlled by moving peripheral regions of the film material towards one another in a controlled manner.
5. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 4, wherein the peripheral regions are moved a specific distance towards one another.

6. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 4, wherein the peripheral regions are moved parallel to one another or towards one another in radial directions.
7. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the tension is controlled in such a manner that, in the region of the receptacle depression, a substantially crease-free region and a region provided with controlled creases are formed.
8. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the film material is brought to a controlled temperature before or during the deforming process, which makes permanent deformation of the film material possible.
9. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 8, wherein the temperature is raised or lowered during the deforming process.
10. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the film material is partially or completely printed before the deforming process.
11. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the film material is printed with distortion-sensitive contents, such as writing, logos or trade marks in a region which is only slightly distorted during the deforming process.
12. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the film material is printed with an undistorted printed image.

13. (Cancelled) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the film material is deformed with a positive or a negative mould.
14. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 13, wherein the positive or the negative mould is unheated.
15. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 13, wherein the positive or the negative mould are heated and brought to a predetermined temperature.
16. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 13, wherein the positive or the negative mould are subjected to a partial vacuum.
17. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the film material is heated and deformed during a deformation time between ~~at the~~ positive and a negative mould, the tension in the film material being relieved in a controlled manner during the deformation time or after a recovery time after the end of the deformation time.
18. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 17, wherein the recovery time can be up to several seconds long.
19. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the flexible film material is delivered to a deforming station in cycles, such that a number of receptacle depressions are formed simultaneously with each stroke of the cycle, with margins of the web being kept under controlled tension

20. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 19, wherein the film material is delivered in the form of a continuous web or in the form of individual blanks.
21. (Currently amended) A method of manufacturing a product packed in flexible film material, especially a food product, comprising the steps of:

providing a positive and negative mould having edge portions and upper portions;
forming a single receptacle depression in the film material between the moulds, wherein the film material is kept under controlled tension while it is being moulded, so that controlled creases are formed in the film material in such that the reducing the tension is reduced in a controlled manner whereby additional film material is allowed to penetrate between the positive and negative moulds;
wherein creases are formed in the film material around the entire edge portion and the upper portion of the film material retains its original shape during the deforming procedure; and

placing a product to be packed in the receptacle depression.
22. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 21, wherein the food product is introduced into the receptacle depression in a free-flowing state.
23. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 21, wherein the receptacle depression is sealed, especially with a sealing film.

24. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in Claim 23, wherein a peripheral sealing rim or seam is formed, especially by bonding or ultrasonic welding.
25. (Currently amended) A device for permanently deforming a flexible film material, the device comprising:

a positive and/or a negative mould having edge portions and upper portions and a means for holding peripheral regions of the film material on the positive or negative moulds;

wherein the film material is kept under controlled tension while it is being moulded, so that tension is reduced in a controlled manner whereby allowing additional film material to penetrate between the positive and negative mould;

wherein controlled creases are formed in the film material around the entire edge portion of the moulds such that the tension is reduced in a controlled manner during the deforming procedure and a receptacle depression is formed in the film material in the upper portion of the moulds.
26. (Currently amended) The device as claimed in Claim 25, wherein the positive or the negative mould can be connected to a vacuum source.
27. (Previously presented) The device as claimed in Claim 25, further comprising a heating means for heating the film material to a controlled temperature.
28. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the product to be packed is a food product .